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CIA Link Protested By MSU

EAST LANSING, Mich. (UPI)—The president of Michigan State University said Friday the school hired intelligence specialists for an aid project to Viet Nam but had no idea they were affiliated with the Central Intelligence Agency.

President John A. Hannah flatly contradicted two MSU officials who headed the project, both of whom said the university openly borrowed five CIA men to provide counterintelligence training for the South Viet Nam government of the late President Ngo Dinh Diem.

HANNAH said no one hired for the project by MSU had any known CIA affiliation, past or present. He acknowledged, however, that "some of our people had suspicions." He said the five men may have done some CIA cloak and dagger work although it was never proved.

Hannah told a news conference that MSU, hired by the State Department to help South Viet Nam set up better civil police and civil service programs, signed up police officials in various specialties to help with the program.

"In the field of countersubversion, these specialists were not available from American civil police organizations but could be recruited only from other government agencies," Hannah said.

"Having accepted responsibility in the entire civil police field as defined by the Vietnamese government, we employed on our staff individuals who had a background in intelligence work for the United States government."

"NONE of these, at any time of employment, was known by the university or its representatives to have affiliations with the Central Intelligence Agency."

Last Thursday Wesley Fishel, an MSU professor who headed the university's project in Saigon from February, 1956, to May, 1958, said the five CIA men were openly borrowed from the agency "simply to train the Vietnamese civil police in counter-subversive activities."

"There was no secret about it," Fishel told United Press International. "Their job was one of training. They were employed by the university ... they did no cloak and dagger work."